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## **CIA comeback**

The Central Intelligence Agency will get a new lease on life from the Reagan administration, after years of feeling a leash on life.

As that occurs, it is important to keep in mind not all the criticisms of past CIA behavior were because the agency succeeded at dirty tricks. Much of the criticism came because the CIA was doing such stupid things. Some of its dirty tricks were foolish, and their failure was enough to bring jeers from observers of any ideological persuasion. CIA support of the overthrow and killing of Chile's Allende was murderous.

Americans can tolerate some meanness to survive in a rough world. Less tolerable is a meanness that is indiscriminate and counterproductive.

Even at the cost of CIA morale, some shaking of values and priorities was necessary. Now CIA needs strengthening, especially its intelligence-gathering, and if dirty tricks must be resumed to deal with specific dangers this nation faces, their management should be split off from the agency to protect the integrity of intelligence work.

The CIA also must revive its counterintelligence ability. The Soviet KGB, in concert with operatives from allied countries, has continued to grow and penetrate the West. Russian agents are carting off information from industrialized nations by the ton, not only political and diplomatic information but business and technological data as well.

A strong CIA is needed, and can be strong without jeopardizing its sense of purpose and proportion, if that is the will of the new administration.